

A RUBRIC

THE aster puts its purple on
When flowers begin to fall,
To suit the solemn antiphon
Of Autumn's ritual ;

And deigns, unwearied, to stand
In robes pontifical,
Till Indian Summer leaves the land,
And Winter spreads the pall.

JOHN B. TABB.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

“EVEN after twenty years London has hardly caught my tone yet,” said George Bernard Shaw, as he curled himself up in my arm-chair and looked placidly at the ceiling, stroking meanwhile a somewhat unkempt beard.

That sentence expresses shortly and accurately the attitude of Shaw to London, as well as that of London to Shaw. For Shaw has undoubtedly a tone peculiar to himself, Shawism being, as he himself avers, distinctly and fundamentally a religion. Now London has never been able to comprehend completely what Shaw has been about. It has gaped at him, shrugged its shoulders, smiled with a passing amusement, and gone its way, wondering vaguely if the religion of the future involves the apotheosis of the absurd. Shaw, on his side, takes courage when men call him a fool. “All human progress,” he replies, as in a recent article in *Cosmopolis*, “involves, as its first condition, the willingness of the

pioneer to make a fool of himself. The sensible man is the man who adapts himself to existing conditions. The fool is the man who persists in trying to adapt the conditions to himself." Now Shaw has always taken the extraordinary course of thinking out every question — from the Deity to mutton-chops — for himself, and, furthermore, of publishing his conclusions whenever he could find a hearing, and finally of acting upon them. This is a tone which London is still very far from catching. When, at the Shelley Society's first big meeting, Shaw announced himself as, like Shelley, "a socialist, an atheist and a vegetarian," London shivered, but understood. A socialist is a man who deals in dynamite, an atheist is a man who will steal your spoons, and a vegetarian is a man who has not the pluck of a louse. So far, so good. We have our Shaw in a nutshell, and his vegetarianism will protect us from the dreadful consequences of his atheism and his socialism.

But it presently appeared that Shaw by no means answered to his label. The atheist began writing articles which advocated the free and open use of churches at all times by all men. The socialist laughed at the impossibilities of anarchism and gently chaffed the futilities of the International Socialist Congress. The vegetarian who neither smoked nor drank alcohol was found to be as intellectually full-blooded as the scribblers who gather in bars where the wild asses quench their thirst. And when it was found that the agitator who wanted to invert the social order was a brilliant critic of music, of pictures and of plays, wishing no more than the Archbishop of Canterbury to eliminate art from life, London began to reconsider the label. When, finally, Shaw was found to be preaching revolt to the grimy East from a tub in the afternoon and tickling the cultured West with

"Arms and the Man" in the evening, London gave up the endeavour to place him. It decided to regard him as a disturbing element — the pinch of powder that causes the draught of life to effervesce. And certain it is that whenever Shaw pokes his pen into a matter or finds his feet at a meeting, there will be a fizz. For the average man believes in institutions; Shaw believes only in himself.

"And how," I asked, "did you acquire your tone? Tell me something of your parentage and education."

"I was born in Dublin in 1856. The great point about my family was its respectability. I had unlimited uncles and aunts, and myriads of cousins. Without disliking them personally, I had a theory that they were snobs and humbugs, a conception which I extended later to the whole class to which I belonged. Besides their respectability, their chief merit was a remarkable aptitude for playing all sorts of wind instruments by ear. Thus, for example, my father, the most unlucky, incompetent and impecunious of mortals, played 'Home, Sweet Home,' upon the flute. His post in the Civil Service was abolished by 1850, which will give you a notion of how surpassingly useless a sinecure it must have been. He sold his pension and embarked the proceeds in a wholesale corn business — we were too respectable for retail trade — and spent the rest of his life in contemplating his warehouse and wondering why he became poorer year by year. As to education, I had none."

"But you can write?"

"Ah — but the word education brought to my mind four successive schools where my parents got me out of the way for half a day. In these *crèches* — for that is exactly what they were — I learnt nothing. How I

could have been such a sheep as to go to them when I could just as easily have flatly refused, puzzles and exasperates me to this day. They did me a great deal of harm, and no good whatever. However, my parents thought I ought to go, and everybody else thought I ought to go, and I thought I ought to go, being too young to have any confidence in my own instincts. So I went. And if you can in any public way convey to these idiotic institutions my hearty curse, you will relieve my feelings infinitely."

"I expect you were rather unpopular with your masters."

"As a schoolboy I was incorrigibly idle and worthless. And I am proud of the fact."

"After all," continued Shaw, curling one leg over the other, "I *did* get an education. My mother was a very active musician, and we had rehearsals of a choral and orchestral society in our house. So before I was fifteen, I knew at least one important work by Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, and Gounod from cover to cover, and whistled the themes to myself as the street-boy whistles music-hall songs. Moreover there is a modest National Gallery in Dublin where boys may prowl. I prowled. Whenever I had any money, which hardly ever happened, I bought volumes of the Bohn translation of Vasari; and at fifteen I knew enough of a considerable number of Italian and Flemish painters to recognize their work at sight. On second thoughts I must conclude that I was really a very highly educated boy — thanks to Communism in pictures."

"What brought you to London and literature?"

"I was driven to write because I could do nothing else. In an old novel of mine — 'Cashel Byron's

Profession' — the hero, a prizefighter, remarks that it's not what a man would like to do, but what he *can* do, that he must work at in this world. I wanted to be another Michael Angelo, but could n't draw — to be a musician, but could n't play — to be a dramatic singer, but had no voice. It's so very hard to discover what you *can* do; you may spend half your life in the search. I am quite sure I have n't found out half of my own capabilities yet. Anyhow, I did not want to write, but as that was the only thing I knew I could do, I did it. I began in the office of a land agent, who honorably appreciated the fact that I was intelligent, that I did not steal his money, and perhaps also that I did not take the faintest interest in his business. At twenty I determined to plunge into London."

"Had you published anything at the time?"

"My published works consisted of a letter written when I was sixteen or seventeen to 'Public Opinion,' in which I sought to stem the force of the first great Moody and Sankey revival by the announcement that I, personally, had renounced religion as a delusion."

"Then of course London greeted you as a prophet."

"London was not ripe for me. Nor was I ripe for London. I was in an impossible position. I was a foreigner — an Irishman, the most foreign of all foreigners when he has not gone through the University Mill. I was, as I have said, not uneducated; but unfortunately what I knew was exactly what the educated Englishman did not know, and what he knew I either did n't know, or did n't believe. My destiny was to educate London, but I had neither studied my pupil nor related my ideas properly to the common stock of human knowledge. I was provincial — unpresentable. Now, tell me candidly — do you regard me as a well-dressed man as I sit here?"

"Your outward appearance," I replied, "suggests that you are — well — a fairly respectable plasterer."

"Just so," said Shaw, glancing placidly down his figure. "Now, when people reproach me with the unfashionableness of my attire, they forget that to me it seems like the raiment of Solomon in all his glory by contrast with the indescribable seediness of those days when I trimmed my cuffs to the quick with scissors, and wore a tall hat and *soi-disant* black coat, green with decay. I wrote novel after novel, five long ones in all, and innumerable articles. No publisher would touch them; no editor would look at me. But my self-sufficiency was proof against all discouragement. For nine years there was no break in the clouds. At first I earned a little by devilling for a musical critic, whose paper died, — partly of me. He followed it to the grave. Then London absolutely refused to tolerate me on any terms. As the nine years progressed, I had one article accepted by G. R. Sims, who had just started a short-lived paper. It brought me fifteen shillings. Full of hope and gratitude, I wrote a really brilliant contribution. That finished me. On another occasion a publisher asked me for some verses to fit some old blocks which he had bought up for a school prize book. I wrote a parody of the thing he wanted, and sent it as a joke. To my stupefaction he thanked me seriously, and paid me five shillings. I was touched, and wrote him a serious verse for another picture. He took it as a joke in questionable taste, and my career as a versifier ended. In those nine years I made £6. And yet I have been called an upstart."

"And then the clouds scattered?"

"Yes — dispelled by the sunshine of William Archer's countenance, which broke upon me one day in the British Museum reading-room, where I was found reading

Karl Marx's 'Capital,' with the orchestral score of 'Tristan und Isolde' on the folding-desk. That was in 1885. Archer took my affairs in hand; got me books to review from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and obtained for me the appointment of art-critic to the *World*. Then I began to make money—nearly £100 a year after a while. Archer also proposed collaboration in a drama which he had planned out on the 'well-made' lines of Scribe. I took it, and produced two acts so outrageously off the 'well-made' lines that Archer at once ceased to wonder that I was a failure. Some years afterwards I fished out the play, added a third act, and called it 'Widower's Houses.' It was produced at the Independent Theater, caused a fortnight's violent quarrelling in the press, and gave James Welch, the young actor who made a reputation as Lickcheese, his first big chance. However, I anticipate. For the next four years I criticised every picture show in London, and reviewed heaps of books. In 1884, when the *Star* was founded, I joined the political staff. Here my impossibility broke out worse than ever. They simply could n't print my articles. Finally, as a compromise, I was given a column of the paper every week to fill with some non-political matter—say music. This column, which was signed 'Corno di Bassetto,' was a mixture of triviality, vulgarity, farce and tomfoolery with genuine criticism. Now that I had learned how to write and to criticise, my old knowledge of music filled my hands with weapons, and when Louis Engel, the best hated musical critic in Europe, got into a scrape with one of his pupils and had to leave the *World*, his post fell to 'Corno di Bassetto.' I wrote a page of musical criticism in the *World* every week until on Yates' death in 1894, I gave up this labor of Hercules (You have no

conception of what musical criticism means, done as I did it,) and was succeeded by Robert Hichens, of 'Green Carnation' fame. By that time I had only one more critical continent to conquer. But I wanted the right editor, one with the virtues of Yates — and some of his faults as well, perhaps. I found him in Frank Harris, who had just revived the *Saturday Review*, and offered me the post of dramatic critic. Then my fame went up by leaps and bounds; people began to talk about me, even to interview me. They thought it so quaint that a man who was uniformly sober should be uniformly brilliant."

"By the way, why did you become a vegetarian? Was n't it an awful nuisance?"

"I became a vegetarian about fifteen years ago, when vegetarian restaurants began to crop up here and there and make vegetarianism possible for a man too poor to be specially catered for. My attention had been called to the subject first by Shelley, and then by a lecturer. But of course the enormity of eating the scorched corpses of animals — cannibalism with its heroic dish omitted — becomes impossible the moment it becomes consciously instead of thoughtlessly habitual. I am a teetotaller because my family has already paid the Shaw debt to the distilling industry so munificently as to leave me no further obligations, and because my mind requires no artificial stimulant. A good proportion of the artistic work of the day, I know, is born of the tea-pot, the bottle or the hypodermic syringe. But I flatly declare that a man fed on whiskey and dead bodies cannot do the finest work of which he is capable."

"Do you mean to continue play-writing?"

"Certainly. I determined years ago that if I did not write six plays before I was forty, I would not write

plays at all. My fortieth birthday is past, and the six plays are written, with a little one thrown in as a make weight. You can only learn to do a thing by doing it over and over again. When I have written twelve plays I expect I shall be able to write a very good one. As to those already finished—of the first, 'Widower's Houses,' I have spoken already. It is published and is entirely unreadable except for the preface and appendices, which are good. The others are 'The Philanderer,' which contains one or two good scenes in a framework of mechanical farce and trivial filth, "Mrs. Warren's Profession"—the oldest profession in the world, you know—an appalling play which it would serve the public right to have powerfully acted at them, 'Arms and the Man,' a romantic comedy of harmless disillusion, which, I believe, is almost popular in America, chiefly owing to Mr. Richard Mansfield's individuality, 'Candida,' a sort of religious play with an East End clergyman and so forth, 'The Man of Destiny,' a one act play in which Napoleon is the chief figure, and finally 'You Never Can Tell,' a Shawesque comedy. 'The Man of Destiny' has just been accepted by Sir Henry Irving. Putting aside absurd hole and corner performances for copyrighting purposes, these dramas, with the exception of 'Widower's Houses' and 'Arms and the Man' have never been performed. Yes, I certainly intend to go on writing plays. But I am afraid I don't go to work in a very methodical way. When an idea occurs to me I just work it up at odd moments—on the top of a bus or in a railway train. 'Arms and the Man' was mostly written on a bus. I have n't the least doubt of my own success. It may not be a commercial success. The public may fail in their part of the business. But I shall not fail in mine. And the difficulties in the way of

performance will finally be overcome by the fact that I possess the art of writing parts which are very attractive to actors and actresses. Just at present I have a melodrama in hand, and shall follow that up by a light opera. Both these forms of art are in an incredibly debased and silly condition."

"Do you find time with all this to peg away still at Socialism?"

"Well, the combination of agitation with musical criticism, especially when a general election comes at the height of the musical season, is enough to kill an elephant, and I have been forced to take things a little easier for the last year or two, so far as oratory is concerned. But, you know, I have been talking in public ever since 1879, when, being horribly nervous, I determined to master the art of public speaking. Ever since Henry George's 'Progress and Poverty' and Karl Marx's 'Capital' led me to find my feet in Socialism without altogether losing my head, I have been an agitator, and from 1883 to 1894, I delivered a harangue, with debate, questions, and so on, every Sunday (sometimes twice, or even thrice) and on a good many week-days, on all sorts of platforms, from the British Association to the triangle at the corner of Salmon's Lane in Limehouse. Of course people talk vaguely of me as an Anarchist, a visionary, and a crank. I am none of these things, but their opposites. I only want a few perfectly practical reforms which shall enable a decent and reasonable man to live a decent and reasonable life, without having to submit to the great injustices and the petty annoyances which meet you now at every turn."

"Then how do you suppose Shaw will go down to posterity — as a critic, a dramatist —"

"Shaw is undoubtedly both a critic and a drama-

tist, not to mention a novelist, an economist, a pamphleteer—”

“And a wag?”

“Ah—I think you have caught my tone. Waggers as a medium is invaluable. My case is really the case of Rabelais over again. When I first began to promulgate my opinions, I found that they appeared extravagant, and even insane. In order to get a hearing, it was necessary for me to attain the footing of a privileged lunatic, with the license of a jester. Fortunately the matter was very easy. I found that I had only to say with perfect simplicity what I seriously meant just as it struck me, to make everybody laugh. My method, you will have noticed, is to take the utmost trouble to find the right thing to say, and then to say it with the utmost levity. And all the time the real joke is that I am in earnest. My friend Graham Wallas once, when somebody began to air some fancies about a biography of me, suggested that its title would probably be ‘The Court Jester who was Hung.’ And there he touched the essence of the situation.”

Shaw has had a hard fight for his success. He has spent his life, so far, on the side of the Opposition, and has grown so used to the denunciations of the respectable British householder that he would feel uncomfortable if he should happen to find himself on the side of the majority. I well remember how at the first night of “Arms and the Man” at the Avenue Theatre, after the audience had been successively puzzled, tickled and delighted, Shaw stepped before the curtain to face the applause. He was tremulous, unnerved, speechless. He looked as though he had expected cabbage stalks, and was disappointed. Suddenly a man in the Gallery began to hoot. Shaw was himself again at once. He opened

his lips, and amid the resulting silence he said, looking at the solitary malcontent. "I quite agree with my friend in the Gallery—but what are two against so many?" A single breath of opposition braced his energies. For Shaw is like the kite, and can rise only when the *popularis aura* is against him.

CLARENCE ROOK.

"THE MORN IS FINE"

THE morn is fine, the wind smells sweet :
The nomad man that lurks in me
Arouses, and I fain would meet
The fellowship of vagrancy.

Along the mountain roads of day,
Hail, foot-farers from near and far ;
Ye who do love the wandering way
Of Beauty, show what stuff ye are.

And face the westward-luring path :
The hours are yours 'twixt dawn and night ;
And since that Youth's sure aftermath
Is Memory—use the day aright,

That by the fire, when evening's here,
Your cronies gathered close around,
The old-time deeds may twinkle clear,
And peace be in the back-log's sound.

RICHARD BURTON.





DRAWN BY A. E. BORIE

THE YOUNG PERSON

THE prevailing characteristic of Mrs. Murdock's boarding-house was a faded gentility. Both Mrs. Murdock and No. 208 had seen better days. The lady herself, crossing her shining and veinous old hands over her black barege lap, was prone to remind her select company of boarders that she had once been a person of wealth and high standing.

But this was a fact that it was hardly necessary for Mrs. Murdock to verbally announce. One saw it at a glance. That this was a house originally intended for fine people who lived finely, the observant visitor at No. 208 could tell by the dim frescoes on the high ceilings, the long crystal chandeliers and the tall mirrors with great gilt frames. So the same observer could have seen by Mrs. Murdock's condescending dignity of manner, by her mode of expressing herself, and by her well modulated voice, that here was a lady above her fortunes.

After an interview with her, a visit to her sitting-room in the back of the house was all that was needed to convince the most sceptical of the glories of Mrs. Murdock's beginnings. Here, on a great mahogany side-board, shining and solid, stood out bravely the family silver, all marked with the late Murdock's crest. Here was her book-case full of her father—the Reverend Hiram Deane's—books. Here were the chairs with curved backs of glossy mahogany and horse-hair seats that had been her grandmother's. And to add the last touch of gentle refinement to this lady-like apartment, here, of sunny afternoons, Mrs. Murdock's niece, Elmira Deane, was to be found sitting stiffly upright on one of the horse-hair chairs, embroidering sun-flowers on a strip of linen.

Strange to say considering the conventional, one

might say Philistine, nature of Mrs. Murdock's boarding-house, its four boarders were all of the literary profession. That Mrs. Murdock herself somewhat looked down upon their sacred calling they none of them denied. That the atmosphere of the house was distinctly discouraging to the fine frenzies of imagination was to be felt by the dullest observer. And yet, so strong was the attraction of 208 for the literary mind, that the last vacancy left by Phenix Byron, who had been sent by Dawson & Company to write up Mexico, had been filled only two hours later by Stafford Connelly, a rising author of the most revolutionary school, of whom his friends said that "he possessed the power of a Zola with the polish of a Maupassant."

This gifted person had moved into his small apartment at No. 208 at five in the afternoon and at half-past might have been discovered sitting on the corner of his portmanteau, with the few unimportant trifles that comprised his wardrobe scattered about him, and before him, the lid thrown back, the sole-leather trunk that held the precious outpourings of his muse.

The side door of his room communicating with Billy Shenstone's was open, and Billy Shenstone stood in the doorway looking at his friend. Billy Shenstone had brought Connelly to Mrs. Murdock's boarding house. He had said, "it would be better for his style than years of study." And when Billy Shenstone said such things the world of mute, inglorious Miltons generally listened. For Billy Shenstone was the William Wallace Shenstone whose stories in the magazines are so widely read, and Stafford Connelly, notwithstanding the high hopes entertained of his literary prowess, had not yet found a publisher for his masterpiece, "The Hand of Jezebel," which was to place his name among the stars.

Even without reading his work one would have been inclined to say that the divine fire burnt in Stafford Connelly. He looked as a genius should look. Warrington in "Pendennis" was one of his heroes, and it was on the plan of Warrington that he modelled himself. Now in direct contrast to the sleek, smug neatness of Shenstone, he sat, unkempt and rugged, in his shirt sleeves and without a collar. He smoked a short briar-wood pipe, his chin was blue and stubby and his heavy dark hair hung in long, slightly curly locks about a fine forehead. Reaching down into the trunk for the manuscript of "The Hand of Jezebel," he said to his friend.

"Well, what's the charm to the budding genius about this house? Why did you insist on my coming? Is the old lady downstairs the one who is going to lead me by the hand into the temple of fame?"

"No," said Shenstone, "not the old lady, the young lady."

"The young lady? I never knew there was a young lady. How young a lady?"

Shenstone screwed up his eyes in meditative reckoning of Miss Deane's age.

"About eighteen—a sweet young girl about eighteen, with a pair of soft blue eyes, and a little red cherry for a mouth, and two round cheeks of a pale pink, and plump white hands with square tips to the fingers, and a passion for embroidering samplers with her back to the light—a charming young girl!"

"Great Powers!" murmured the newcomer, in the horror of the picture dropping "The Hand of Jezebel" on the floor, "How ghastly!"

"Ghastly? Charming! This sweet young thing is here, you will see her blushing like a violet by a mossy stone at dinner to-night. She will be too shy and too

well brought up to say more than a word to you, but that will not prevent her from leading you into the Temple of Fame. She has led others before you. We can't get there without her."

"You fall in love with a woman like that?" cried his friend in loud-voiced scorn.

"Not in the least. We've never thought of such a thing. But she helps us in our work. She guides our feeble steps. She goes before us carrying a light through the dark places."

"Will you kindly explain to me what you're talking about?"

"Assuredly—listen. You know The Young Person. You know how the editor cherishes her and compiles his magazine, and requests the author to write his book all for her perusal? You know the way we've railed against her, and called down maledictions on her head? And you know the way in the end she conquers us, and we bow before her and acknowledge her supremacy?"

"You may—I never will. Here, by 'The Hand of Jezebel,' I swear to defy The Young Person, as I always have. She is ruining our literature, she is killing our art. She has bound our muse down, and clipped its wings with the little scissors hanging at her girdle, till the poor thing will never fly again. She is the bane of every artist in the country. She has forced us all to be smirking liars. Because of her none of us dare to be true. She has broken the heart of naturalism and chilled the blood of romance. Let me starve in a garret before I cut a paragraph or change a sentence in a mistaken effort to keep her mind as blank as a sheet of white paper."

"That's the way we all begin by talking. Then, after a year of having our stuff 'returned with thanks' we realize what the power of The Young Person is—we

begin to see that it's a serious business to declare war against her. She starves us out — *mais il faut vivre.*"

"And you've capitulated?"

"Entirely. I am The Young Person's slave and champion. I am one of the most ardent advocates of keeping her mind like a sheet of white paper. I write stories that you might nourish babes upon. And the result? — I have ceased to walk on my uppers."

"Just for a handful of silver he left us!" That I should live to see you fall so low!"

"Yes, I know it's heartrending, but I'm coming to Miss Deane. This is the secret of her power — she *is* The Young Person! There are other types of the species in New York, but there can be no other as perfect as she is. And here, shut away in this old brown-stone front on the East side, Phenix Byron found her blushing unseen and wasting her sweetness on Mrs. Murdock and several, commonplace, illiterate boarders who never held a pen or read a book."

"And it is *her* literary judgment that you think would be of such value to me?"

"Precisely — of more value to you than years of study. See what it has done for Phenix Byron and for me! We always read our stuff to her and to Mrs. Murdock. When Mrs. Murdock coughs or sends Elmira up to get her handkerchief we always know that we must strike out the paragraph. At times Elmira expresses herself as somewhat surprised at the forward behavior of our heroine. Elmira is the best brought-up girl in the world, and we immediately subdue the heroine. After a reading to Elmira and her aunt, the MS. being neatly marked with a red cross where Elmira has been sent to get a handkerchief, with a 'B' where she has blushed, with an 'O' where she herself has observed

that the heroine did not please her, we know that our work may be submitted with safety to the magazine that is most boastfully 'fitted for perusal in the home circle.' And we are rarely disappointed in the results. I have often thought that Elmira is one of the most perfect examples of The Young Person in the savage state now extant."

"And this is the influence that was to do more for my style than years of study? Do you suppose in your wretched, mercenary mind that I would cut one sentence from any work of mine, because it would be too strong meat for a green girl? I am not a writer for babes and sucklings. I write for the thinking man and woman."

"It is not much use writing for the thinking man and woman when they never see it. But still—let that rest. Reserve your judgment till after to-night. This evening I purpose reading my new story to Elmira and Mrs. Murdock. You also may have the supreme felicity of listening, and you will see how necessary a person Elmira Deane is in the world of literature."

Half-past six was the dinner hour at No. 208, and as the old-fashioned clock chimed its single note, Mrs. Murdock and her boarders gathered round the table. The newcomer, coated and collared now, but with his long locks hanging leonine over his temples, was presented to Mrs. Webster, who did the article on "Woman and Her Fancies" in the *Sunday Shield*. Mrs. Webster, shaking out her stiff napkin and drawing it up over her shining silk lap to tuck one corner in between the straining buttonholes of her bounteous basque, thrust her head forward and peered at the new arrival under the red lamp-shade, then welcomed him jovially as became a member of the craft. Arthur Bronson, the fourth boarder, sub-editor of the weekly *High-Tone*,

was rarely present at dinner, Mrs. Murdock explained from behind the towering structure of an ancestral tea-urn. Then, as a side-door opened and a slim young figure entered the room, she delayed her task — her shrivelled hands with their shining knuckles and prominent veins hanging suspended over the tea-cups — to say proudly,

“My niece, Miss Deane, Mr. Connelly.”

The young girl sat down at the foot of the table and blushed, and nervously moved her knife and fork with a pair of plump hands. She wore a white dress, fastened round the neck and waist with broad light-blue ribbons. Her face in the lamp-light was as delicately pink as a Duchesse rose, and once, when Stafford Connelly undertook to survey her with a look of moody disapproval, he surprised an investigating glance from a pair of large, china-blue eyes that were as limpidly innocent as the eyes of a peaceful baby.

“Mr. Shenstone,” said Mrs. Murdock, as a neat-handed Phyllis began to pass the viands, “is going to be good enough to read us his new story to-night.”

“What’s the name, William?” asked Mrs. Webster, setting her knife and fork down with their tips resting against the sides of her plate, and ducking her head to peer at Shenstone under the lamp’s red umbrella.

“I have gone to Shakespeare again — ‘And I for no woman.’ I hope you’ll like it; I fancy it’s a little bit new.”

“When is Mr. Connelly going to treat us to some of the flights of his muse?” queried Mrs. Webster, turning her merry old eyes on the long-locked revolutionary.

“I’m afraid the flights of my muse would not meet

with the approval of the present company," said Connelly, determining to declare his independence in the very teeth of the Young Person.

At this everybody stared. Mrs. Webster laughed knowingly and wagged her head at him. Mrs. Murdock stopped rattling the tea-cups and fastened upon him the eyes of an aged experience in dubious questioning. But Miss Deane's limpid orbs raised suddenly and dwelling upon him with a look of wide and startled inquiry, were by far the most disconcerting.

"How do you mean?" she asked, her puzzled curiosity overpowered her shyness.

"Elmira, my child," said Mrs. Murdock in the tone one might imagine Cornelia using to the Gracchi, "Please tell Delia to bring back that stewed celery."

After dinner, Shenstone, with a lamp beside him, settled himself in one of the horse-hair chairs, and, facing his audience, began to read the new story. It was a romantic love-tale, in which a proud and penniless hero was beloved by a wealthy and tenderly adoring heroine. It seemed to interest the four listeners, especially Elmira, who soon let her work drop in her lap, and sat absorbed with her eyes upon Shenstone's forehead shining above the manuscript. When, however, toward the middle of the tale, the hero, in a moonlit moment of farewell, pressed a light and tender kiss upon the heroine's cheek, Elmira's gaze was suddenly lowered and she resorted to her sun-flowers, gently blushing.

Mrs. Webster coughed. Shenstone looked over the top of his manuscript, paused, felt in his pocket, and drawing out a pencil made a mark on the margin of the page. But later on, when the hero determined to bid the heroine an eternal farewell and she, overwhelmed by the horror of the thought, threw bashfulness and maidenly

reserve to the winds and, in broken accents, confessed her love, consternation was visible on Mrs. Murdock's aged countenance and her deep voice suddenly cut into the palpitating scene.—

"Elmira, please, dear, go to my room and bring me my glasses which you will find either on the mantel, or the bureau, or the shelf under your Uncle Josiah's portrait."

"Yes, Auntie," said Elmira, folded up her work and withdrew.

"What's the matter with that?" asked Mrs. Webster as soon as Elmira was outside the door. Shenstone had put his manuscript down on the table and was marking vigorously with his red pencil.

"I cannot allow Elmira to hear such things. No self-respecting woman would ever speak to any man in that manner. No — no — that scene must be changed before I can allow Elmira to hear it. The man must propose to the woman, and she may modestly accept."

Shenstone, who had stopped marking, read over his mutilated manuscript and groaned feebly.

"It will be as flat as last night's beer," protested Mrs. Webster.

Mrs. Murdock did not approve of this comparison and said stiffly.

"We must consider the mind of youth. Elmira cannot hear that story in its present form. If Mr. Shenstone cares about her hearing it he must change it."

"It shall be changed," said Shenstone, with the air of a hero and a martyr.

During the week that followed, each morning while he dressed, Stafford Connelly announced to his friend his intention of quitting No. 208 and seeking more congenial quarters. At night, however, after a good dinner

— for Mrs. Murdock's *cuisine* was capital — he seemed more reconciled to his Philistine environment, and there were times when he went so far as to commend Mrs. Murdock's antique graces, and now and then even spent the half-hour after dinners conversing with Miss Deane.

This young lady, grown accustomed to his leonine style, was quite talkative, and with her round and dimpled face bent over her long piece of embroidery, prattled gaily while he sat and stared at her with the interest of the writer for the new type.

"That girl is very extraordinary," he said to his friend upstairs in their rooms. "Do you think she's deficient in mind?"

"Elmira?" shouted Shenstone. "Great powers, no! Her little skull is as full of mind as an egg is of meat. But she's The Young Person, that's all. When Elmira surprises you just think of that, then nothing about her will ever surprise you again."

"I cannot imagine any one writing a story that would appeal to her unless it was about dolls and a sampler."

"Elmira likes love," said Shenstone, meditatively. "Love's young dream. And when you can write a love story that Elmira will like your fortune will be made. Editors will dog your footsteps."

A short time after this conversation, Connelly, coming in early from a visit to the great newspaper which occasionally condescended to print his shorter stories, met Elmira on the door steps coming in too. In the dim hallway, with a softened, rosy light filtering through the thin red silk curtains drawn over the hall-door windows, they stood and talked. Elmira looked very pretty in her new fawn-colored cloth coat, with a brown felt hat, dinted down the middle, on her smooth braids, and her round chin resting on the little brown fur

animal that was hooked about her neck. No one would ever suppose that Elmira lived in an East side boarding-house, affected by authors. She had an air of conventional stylishness that made her look like one of those splendid young ladies who walk so briskly up Fifth avenue of sunny afternoons.

"Why do n't you ever read us any of your stories, Mr. Connelly?" she asked, putting her muff under her arm and pulling off her thick dog-skin gloves. Connelly admired the soft, white hand that slipped so easily out of the loose glove. His eyes were fixed on it as he said:

"Oh, I do n't want to bore you."

"I do n't think you'll bore us," said Elmira politely, but without conviction, "and I'd like to hear one."

"I have n't got one that I'd like to read you," he said, looking into her clear eyes.

"Well, then, write one," said Elmira imperiously.

"All the authors that have lived here have read us their stories, and so must you."

"What would you like me to write one about?" queried the revolutionary, suppressing a smile.

Elmira drooped her head to one side in meditation. Her thick, white eyelids were lowered, the curve of her healthy young cheek was pink as the lips of a sea-shell.

"I like love," she said slowly, "but auntie prefers studies of character. Mrs. Webster says all Auntie wants in a story to have a moral lesson at the end. You could write a love story for me, and squeeze in the moral lesson for Auntie, could n't you?"

"If you really would like a story, I might try," said Stafford Connelly meekly.

That night Shenstone, who was a gentleman of social engagements, did not get in till late. The house was dark as he crept upstairs, but from under Connelly's

door a thread of light shone, cutting the darkness. Opening the door between the two rooms he saw the disciple of the realistic school, in the comfort of an aged dressing gown, seated at his writing table pondering over various papers, while the smoke lay about his head in motionless layers.

"Is this an attack of the Divine Afflatus?" Shenstone asked.

Connelly started and looked darkly over his shoulder.

"Oh, is that you?" he said with affected indifference. "That girl down stairs is determined that I must write her a love-story, and I am wrestling with the muse."

"It will be capital practice," said Shenstone, "capital. You're beginning to see how useful Elmira Deane is in the world of literature."

"Useful! Ornamental I'll admit. But to have to waste my time this way! To have to spend so many days concocting a story for that child! It's cruel."

"Then do n't write it."

"Oh, I'll have to. I promised her I would. She expects it. I may loathe her influence on art, but I can't disappoint her."

His friend drew back his head and shut the door. He thought pleasantly that the spell of No. 208 was already at work on the recalcitrant Stafford Connelly and great things might follow.

This was Thursday. On Saturday night after dinner Connelly sat with the ladies in their sitting-room for a half hour. Mrs. Murdock, her cushioned rocking chair drawn close to the table, looked at a new magazine. Elmira worked on her embroidery, and when she finished a sunflower, patted it with the palm of her hand and held it off, studying it critically.

"Mr. Connelly is going to write a story for us,

Auntie," she said, by way of introducing an agreeable topic.

"That will be very nice," said Mrs. Murdock, not quite sure on the subject, and raising her head to peer at Connelly over her glasses — "Have you anything now on hand?"

"Only one short novelette, 'The Hand of Jezebel.'"

"Dear me!" murmured Mrs. Murdock uneasily.

"Jezebel?" said Elmira, raising her eyes in vivacious interest — "that's the woman who was thrown out of a window and eaten by dogs. I hope nobody's going to be eaten by dogs in your story."

"Nobody," said Connelly.

"Why do n't you read us that, then?" asked Elmira with an air of triumph.

The sudden entrance of Mrs. Webster relieved Connelly from the necessity of answering this question, and a few minutes later he withdrew. But he said to himself that as Elmira really seemed to want him to write her a story he ought to do it.

For the ten nights following Connelly assiduously burned the midnight gas, and the scratching of his pen broke the stillness of his apartment. When Shenstone, returning late, softly opened the door and glanced in, he saw, through a cloud of smoke, his friend's shoulders and dark, long-locked head bent over the writing table. The muse had attacked Connelly vigorously.

At three o'clock in the morning of the tenth day of this literary carouse Connelly read over his maiden effort in the rose-water style and went to bed fatigued. At seven the next morning he got up, read it again, tore it into bits and dropped it in the waste-paper basket.

"I might as well try to write an advertisement for a new cosmetic," he said savagely.

That evening, as he descended the last flight of stairs on his way to dinner, a soft voice from above called him by name. He looked up. Elmira was leaning on her folded arms on the balustrade of the landing above looking at him.

"I heard your step and ran out," she said. "Why was your waste-basket so full of scraps this morning?"

"I had torn up something. How did you know it was?"

"I saw Delia carrying it down and asked her whose it was. Was it my story you had torn up?"

"Yes—it was n't a success."

Elmira's face clouded. "It was my story and you had no right to tear it up. I wanted to see it."

Connelly ascended the stairs and stood close to her, leaning on the balustrade.

"Do you really take any interest in my stories?" he asked, with his deep voice slightly roughened.

Elmira looked at him in dubious curiosity. The expression of his face was something new in her experience of authors.

"Of course I do," she said, suddenly breaking out into a charming smile, "in every little thing connected with you."

In return for this frank confession of friendship Connelly pressed The Young Person's soft hand, held it a moment, looking into her unabashed eyes in a manner strangely fond and troubled for one so averse to her appearance in the scheme of creation.

It was just about this time that the illness of his mother called Shenstone out of town. After hanging between life and death for some time she finally recovered, and it was with a light heart that Shenstone, six weeks from the day of his departure from No. 208,

once again inserted his latch-key in the familiar key-hole.

It was nearly dinner time and quite dark. He encountered no one, reached his room, and, throwing down his bag, pushed open the door into Connelly's apartment. No one was there, and an unwonted air of neatness lent it an unfamiliar aspect. Some of Connelly's clothes, carefully folded, were hanging over the back of a chair. A round, hand-painted pin-cushion depending from the side of the mirror by a broad pink satin ribbon struck Shenstone's eye. The writing-table was clear of papers, save for one exact pile held in place by a glass ink-bottle. Shenstone, as he sought for matches, saw by the lingering light without the title of this production — "Aunt Hilda's Birthday Cake." As his glance fell on these words his hand stopped in its straying search, and he stood still motionlessly gazing. At that moment the door opened and Connelly entered.

The greeting achieved and the gas lit, Connelly turned to the fireplace and began nervously rubbing his hands. A marked change had taken place in him in the six weeks. He was neatly dressed, wore an ordinary necktie, and his long dark hair was clipped down to the conventional length. He looked handsome but commonplace, and his friend's keen eye detected in him a singular air as of one who is crestfallen and pretends to be elated, or who is elated and pretends to be crestfallen.

"What's this?" asked Shenstone, indicating "Aunt Hilda's Birthday Cake." "Have you bowed your crested head and tamed your heart of fire to the proper pitch for writing children's stories?"

"Oh that!" said the other with a careless shrug. "that's a trifle. A little thing I wrote for Miss Deane. She wanted a story and so I tried my hand at the style

she liked and produced that. It's light — the sort of thing for a young girl's reading. She thinks rather well of it."

"What else have you been doing? Dashed off any nursery rhymes in your leisure moments when Aunt Hilda's cake was cooking?"

"Nothing. nothing" — with a languid wave of his hand. "I'm not writing much just at present. I've been idling lately."

"Did you ever manage those changes in 'The Hand of Jezebel' we spoke of?"

"No — not exactly, I worked over it a little and decided nothing could be done. The pivot of the story was at fault, and if I took that out the whole thing fell to pieces. You know we can't spread stories like that broadcast. The reading public includes all ages and both sexes, and authors have got to consider that. I would n't have liked, after 'The Hand of Jezebel' had been published, to have seen such a girl as Miss Deane, for example, reading it. And so I never completed the changes in it."

"What did you do with it? remodel it as a sequel to 'Aunt Hilda?'"

"No — not exactly. I" — he stirred with the toe of his boot some ashes in the fire-place, "There it is — all that's left of it."

"Burned it!" Shenstone looked at the ashes, then at his friend's clipped hair, then at the manuscript of "Aunt Hilda's Birthday Cake." As he looked the dinner bell sounded, and Connelly turned with sudden speed toward the bureau glass, and, before the blank gaze of his friend, solicitously eyed his reflection and then brushed his hair.

Shenstone was late for dinner and found the ladies all

assembled. Mrs. Murdock looked benign and had a pleased glitter in her eye that he never remembered to have noticed before. Mrs. Webster greeted him with her gayest smiles, but Miss Elmira Deane was grave and dignified. She looked older and much more of a personage than she had done two months ago. She took her seat at the table without blushing, and Shenstone noticed that she served the soup, which she had never done before. To his surprise, too, on his taking the seat at her right hand, she turned and addressed to him an admirably-worded commonplace on the state of the weather. Elmira was coming out.

The dinner had progressed to the pudding when Mrs. Webster, who had been amusing them with gossip of the internal strife on *The Shield*, turned suddenly to Connelly and said with a rallying air —

“Well, how is the office to-day?”

A slight silence fell, and a slow and guilty flush mounted to Stafford Connelly's hair.

“What office?” asked Shenstone, turning his head from one to the other. To his amaze — with an air of dignity that seemed to have descended upon her from some illustrious forebear — Elmira answered,

“Mr. Connelly is now at work in an office. He has a position in Shaw & Smithers' Insurance Agency. It is a book-keeper's. Is it not, Mr. Connelly?”

She did not look at Connelly as she made this query, but, holding back her loose sleeve, stretched her plump, white hand out for the salt with an appearance of refined indifference.

“Oh, I'm a renegade!” said Connelly laughing desperately under his friend's unflinching gaze — “but we — that is I, thought perhaps it would be better, more remunerative you know.”

" 'Just for a handful of silver he left us,' " murmured Shenstone — " 'But 'Aunt Hilda's Birthday Cake' — what of that ?' "

Elmira again answered, and, as she did so, raising her hand to put a stray lock of hair behind her ear, the lamp light struck a single ray from a small diamond on her third finger:—

" Was n't that a sweet story ? But then you know one cannot live on sweet stories, can one ? " And she looked into Shenstone's eyes with an air of smiling condescension that was delightfully like her aunt's.

After dinner the ladies retired to the sitting room to hear Mr. Shenstone's new story. Elmira and Stafford Connelly, not immediately leaving the dining-room, Shenstone had an opportunity of hearing how Mr. Connelly had taken such a good position — a hundred and fifty a month — and they thought would give up literature. Shenstone saw that the ladies had decided the time was not yet ripe for more important disclosures. Then the story was read, but Elmira and Stafford Connelly continued to stay in the dining-room.

Indeed they were still there when, the story corrected and folded, Shenstone left the sitting-room and went upstairs. As he passed the open door of the dining-room he saw them standing together in front of the fire, Elmira's small, pointed foot and Stafford Connelly's large, pointed foot, side by side on the fender. The hand which was to have indited such great things rested about Elmira's slim waist, and, as Shenstone passed he heard her say with the new note of decision in her voice,

" No, dear, forty dollars a month is a great deal too expensive for a six-room flat in that locality. "

Shenstone turned stealthily away and stole along the passage and up the darkling staircase. He was thinking;

and as Elmira's soft but decisive accents followed him upward, he murmured in an awed undertone to the darkness:

"I never quite realized before just what it meant — the Power of The Young Person."

H. GERALDINE BONNER.



CURIOUS PUNISHMENTS OF
BYGONE DAYS

VI

THE WHIPPING-POST

JOHN TAYLOUR, the "Water-Poet," wrote in 1630:

"In London, and within a mile, I ween
There are jails or prisons full fifteen
And sixty whipping-posts and stocks and cages."

Church and city records throughout England show how constantly these whipping-posts were made to perform their share of legal and restrictive duties. In the reign of Henry VIII a famous Whipping Act had been passed by which all vagrants were to be whipped severely at the cart-tail "till the body became bloody by reason of such whipping." This enactment remained in force nearly through the reign of Elizabeth, when the whipping-post became the usual substitute for the cart, but the force of the blows was not lightened.

The poet Cowper has left in one of his letters an amusing account of a sanguinary whipping which he witnessed. The thief had stolen some ironwork at a fire at Olney in 1783, and had been tried, and sentenced to be whipped at the cart-tail.

"The fellow seemed to show great fortitude, but it was all an imposition. The beadle who whipped him had his left hand filled with red ochre, through which, after every stroke, he drew the lash of the whip, leaving the appearance of a wound upon the skin, but in reality not hurting him at all. This being perceived by the constable who followed the beadle to see that he did his duty, he (the constable) applied the cane without any such management or precaution to the shoulders of the

beadle. The scene now became interesting and exciting. The beadle could by no means be induced to strike the thief hard, which provoked the constable to strike harder; and so the double flogging continued until a lass of Silver End, pitying the pityful beadle thus suffering under the hands of the pityless constable, joined the procession, and placing herself immediately behind the constable seized him by his capillary pigtail, and pulling him backwards by the same, slapped his face with Amazonian fury. This concentration of events has taken more of my paper than I intended, but I could not forbear to inform you how the beadle thrashed the thief, the constable the beadle, and the lady the constable, and how the thief was the only person who suffered nothing."

As a good, sound British institution, and to have familiar home-like surroundings in the new strange land, the whipping-post was promptly set up, and the whip set at work in all the American colonies. In the orders sent over from England for the restraint of the first settlement at Salem, whipping was enjoined, "as correccon is ordained for the fooles back" — and fools' backs soon were found for the "correccon"; tawny skins and white shared alike in punishment, as both Indians and white men were partakers in crime. Scourgings were sometimes given on Sabbath days and often on lecture days, to the vast content and edification of Salem folk.

The whipping-post was speedily in full force in Boston. At the session of the court held November 30, 1630, one man was sentenced to be whipped for stealing a loaf of bread; another for shooting fowl on the Sabbath, another for swearing, another for leaving a boat "without a pylott." Then we read of John Pease that for "stryking his mother and deryding her he shalbe whipt."

Lying, swearing, taking false toll, perjury, selling rum to the Indians, all were punished by whipping.

Pious regard for the Sabbath was fiercely upheld by the support of the whipping-post. In 1643, Roger Scott, for "repeated sleeping on the Lord's Day," and for striking the person who waked him from his godless slumber, was sentenced to be severely whipped.

Women were not spared in public chastisement. "The gift of prophecy" was at once subdued in Boston by lashes, as was unwomanly carriage. On February 30, 1638, this sentence was rendered:

"Anne ux. Richard Walker being cast out of the church of Boston for intemperate drinking from one inn to another, and for light and wanton behavior, was the next day called before the governour and the treasurer, and convict by two witnesses, and was stripped naked one shoulder, and tied to the whipping-post, but her punishment was respited."

Every year, every month, and in time every week, fresh whippings followed. No culprits were, however, to be beaten more than forty stripes as one sentence; and the *Body of Liberties* decreed that no "true gentleman or any man equall to a gentleman shall be punished with whipping unless his crime be very shameful and his course of life vitious and profligate." In pursuance of this notion of the exemption of the aristocracy from bodily punishment, a Boston witness testified in one flagrant case, as a condonement of the offense, that the culprit "had been a soldier and was a gentleman and they must have their liberties," and he urged letting the case default, and to "make no uprore" in the matter. The lines of social position were just as well defined in New England as in old England; else why was one Mr. Plaistowe, for fraudulently obtaining corn from the Indians, condemned, as

punishment, to be called Josias instead of Mr. as heretofore? His servant, who assisted in the fraud, was whipped. A Maine man named Thomas Taylour for his undue familiarity shown in his "theeing and thouing" Captain Raynes was set in the stocks.

Slander and name-calling were punished by whipping. On April 1, 1634, John Lee "for calling Mr. Ludlowe false-heart knave, hard-heart knave, heavy friend shalbe whipt and fyned XIIs." Six months later he was again in hot water:

"John Lee shalbe whipt and fyned for speaking reproachfully of the Governor, saying hee was but a lawyer's clerk, and what understanding hadd hee more than himselfe, also takeing the Court for making lawes to picke men's purses, also for abusing a mayd of the Governor, pretending love in the way of marriage when himselfe professed hee intended none."

In the latter clause of this count against John Lee doubtless lay the sting of his offenses. For Governor Winthrop was very solicitous of the ethics of love-making, and to deceive the affections of one of his fen-county English serving-lasses was to him without doubt a grave misdemeanor.

Those harmless and irresponsible creatures, young lovers, were menaced with the whip. Read this extract from the Plymouth Laws, dated 1638:

"Whereas divers persons unfit for marriage both in regarde of their yeong yeares, as also in regarde of their weake estate, some practising the inveagling of men's daughters and maids under gardians contrary to their parents and gardians likeing, and of malde servants, without the leave and likeing of their masters: It is therefore enacted by the Court that if any shall make a motion of marriage to any man's daughter or mayde servant, not

having first obtayned leave and consent of the parents or master soe to doe, shall be punished either by fine or corporall punishment, or both, at the discretions of the bench, and according to the nature of the offense."

The New Haven Colony, equally severe on unlicensed lovemaking, specified the "inveagling," whether done by "speech, writing, message, company-keeping, unnecessary familiarity, disorderly night meetings, sinful dalliance, gifts or, (as a final blow to inventive lovers) in any other way."

In New York a whipping-post was set up on the strand, in front of the Stadt Huys, under Dutch rule, and sentences were many. A few examples of the punishment under the Dutch may be given. A sail-maker, rioting in drink around New Amsterdam cut one Van Brugh on the jaw. He was sentenced to be fastened to a stake, severely scourged and a gash made in his left cheek, and to be banished. To the honor of Vrouw Van Brugh let me add that she requested the court that these penalties should not be carried out, or at any rate done in a closed room. One Van ter Goes for treasonable words of great flagrancy was brought with a rope round his neck to a half-gallows, whipped, branded and banished. Roger Cornelisen for theft was scourged in public, while Herman Barenson, similarly accused was so loud in his cries for mercy that he was punished with a rod in a room. From a New York newspaper, dated 1712, I learn that one woman at the whipping-post "created much amusement by her resistance"—which statement throws a keen light on the cold-blooded and brutal indifference of the times to human suffering.

In 1638 a whipping post was set up in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, as a companion to the cage. For "speaking opprobriously," and even for "suspicious

speeches," New Haven citizens were whipped at the "carts podex."

Rhode Island even under the tolerant and gentle Roger Williams had no idle whip. "Larcenie," drunkenness, perjury, were punished at the whipping-post. In Newport malefactors were whipped at the cart-tail until this century. Mr. Channing tells of seeing them fastened to the cart and being thus slowly led through the streets to a public spot where they were whipped on the naked back. Women were at that time whipped in the jail-yard with only spectators of their own sex.

In Plymouth women were whipped at the cart-tail, and the towns resounded with the blows dealt out to Quakers. In 1636, on a day in June, one Helin Billinton was whipped in Plymouth for slander.

There was a whipping-post on Queen Street in Boston, another on the Common, another on State Street, and they were constantly in use in Boston in Revolutionary times. Samuel Breck wrote of the year 1771:

"The large whipping-post painted red stood conspicuously and prominently in the most public street in the town. It was placed in State Street directly under the windows of a great writing school which I frequented, and from there the scholars were indulged in the spectacle of all kinds of punishment suited to harden their hearts and brutalize their feelings. Here women were taken from a huge cage in which they were dragged on wheels from prison, and tied to the post with bare backs on which thirty or forty lashes were bestowed among the screams of the culprit and the uproar of the mob."

The diary of a Boston school-girl of twelve, little Anna Green Winslow, written the same year as Mr. Breck's account, gives a detailed account of the career of one Bet Smith, through workhouse and gaol to whipping-

post, and thence to be "set on the gallows where she behaved with great impudence."

Cowper's account of the tender-hearted beadle is supplemented by a similar performance in Boston as shown in a Boston paper of August 11, 1789. Eleven culprits were to receive in one day the "discipline of the post." Another criminal was obtained by the Sheriff to inflict the punishment, but he persisted in being "tender of strokes," though ordered by the Sheriff to lay on. At last the Sheriff seized the whip and lashed the whipper, then turned to the row of ninepins and delivered the lashes. "The citizens who were assembled complimented the Sheriff with three cheers for the manly determined manner in which he executed his duty."

So common were whippings in the southern colonies at the date of settlement of the country, that in Virginia even "launderers and laundresses" who "dare to wash any unclean Linen, drive bucks, or throw out the water or suds of fowle clothes in the open streetes," or who took pay for washing for a soldier or laborer, or who gave old torn linen for good linen, were severely whipped. Many other offenses were punished by whipping in Virginia, such as slitting the ears of hogs, or cutting off the ends of hogs' ears — thereby removing ear-marks and destroying claim to perambulatory property — stealing tobacco, running away from home, drunkenness, destruction of land-marks; and in 1664 Major Robins brought suit against one Mary Powell for "scandalous speeches" against Rev. Mr. Teackle, for which she was ordered to receive twenty lashes on her bare shoulders and to be banished the country. Of course, for the correction of slaves the whip was in constant use till our Civil War banished slavery and the whipping-post from every state save Maryland and Delaware. This latter-

named commonwealth has been much censured for countenancing the continuance of whipping as a punishment. It is, however, stiffly contended by Delaware magistrates that as a restraint over wife-beaters and other cruel and vicious criminals, the whipping-post is a distinct success and of marked benefit in its influence in the community. It should also be remembered that these are not the only civilized states to approve of whipping for certain crimes. About thirty years ago, when garroting became so frequent and so greatly feared in England, the whipping-post was re-established in England, and whipping once more became an authorized punishment.

There was one hard-hearted and unjust use of the whip which was prevalent in London and other English cities in olden times which I wish to recount with abjuration. At the time of public executions parents were wont to whip their children soundly to impress upon them a lesson of horror of the gallows. As trivial offenses, such as stealing anything in value over a shilling, were punishable by death, and capital crimes were over three hundred in number, executions were of deplorable frequency; hence the condition of children at that time was indeed pitiable. Whipped by most illogical parents, whipped by cruel teachers—even Roger Ascham used to “pinch, nip and bob” Queen Elizabeth when she was his pupil—whipped by masters, whipped by mistresses, it would seem that the moral force of the whipping-post for adults must have been very slight, after so many castigory experiences in youth.

ALICE MORSE EARLE.



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NOTES

WRITING in *The Chap-Book* of a month ago, Professor Brander Matthews came out strongly in favor of the French custom of signing literary, domestic and artistic criticism; and if you pick up that exceedingly thoughtful, suggestive, and elevating collection of short essays, written by Mr. W. M. Payne of *The Dial*, and published under the title of "Little Leaders," you will find another vigorous attack on anonymity. These two writers, I take it, represent the best American thought on this difficult question; and yet I confess I remain unconvinced. The general public is probably profoundly uninterested in the whole business and considerably astonished at the fury of contradiction which a discussion of it rouses among critics themselves. Still, it is not the critic's fault if the outside world takes him less seriously than he takes himself; and it is only right that at intervals he should be allowed to discuss the technicalities of his own craft *coram populo*. Let him have his fling, my dear sir; he is a poor, much-abused creature, the sport of every writer from Schopenhauer to Matthews, a "literary bravo," "an assassin skulking behind the mask of anonymity"—you know the sort of man he is. The noose has been round his neck all his life, and only a few moments of halting speech are allowed before the bolts are drawn and the trap-door flies from under him. I come merely to bury Cæsar, not to praise him; so stand aside for a while and let me have full elbow-room.

¶ A piece of criticism, argues the apostle of signatures, is like a patent medicine, it can never be genuine without its proper trademark. The critic, he gives us to under-

stand, is only saved from malice and venality by a fear that his sins will find him out; his sense of responsibility is so slight that his name alone will keep him from acts of bad faith. But to my mind, the proof of the critic is in the criticism. A signature neither adds to nor detracts from the weight of a judgment; and it has been proved by many years of unsigned criticism that a writer may take up his pen in honesty and intelligence without letting the world into the secret of authorship. You must place some small confidence in every trade; and you do not find a *prima facie* case that your grocer gives you sand for sugar—why without examination should you denounce the critic as a liar and a rogue? In brief, anonymous articles mean neither cowardice nor recklessness. Of course not, you say; who ever supposed they did? My dear sir, wait till you have heard a fifth-rate lady novelist talk about reviewers:

“Guess you’d fancy
The eternal bung wuz loose!”

The critic’s trade — though you can never get her to see it — is carried on with more distinction and a finer literary sense than the common novelist’s, for instance, or the minor poet’s. There is no more virtue in three volumes of loose English and corrupt sentiment than in two columns of sound sense and clean writing. The critic has at least as much claim to consideration as “the creator” whom he reviews; and if it please him to suppress a signature which is not pertinent to the discussion, he has a perfect right to do so. The lady novelist detects wounded vanity or personal malice in every syllable of depreciation. She is never weary of insisting that the critic could not write the miserable works which he tears to ribbons. Of course he could not — because he is a critic. If he is so blind to right and wrong that he could

pass as his own the rubbish he dismisses in a paragraph, he should never again venture to take pen in hand. It is a matter of standard, after all. The critic produces little because he is fastidious; he deserves the world's gratitude because he leaves it less to forget; and he has earned the right to grant or withhold his signature as he chooses.

¶ I know the system is imperfect, but I do not think you are likely to improve it by any sudden and radical change. If the unsigned article now and then gives the scoundrel who finds his way into every business too obvious an opportunity, the other method of universal signatures opens the door to unashamed villainy and destroys the worth and dignity of criticism. These are the extremes of the two systems. No respectable critic is wont to aggravate his contempt for the charlatan, because his name is concealed. On the contrary, the suppression of the signature tends to a greater candor by destroying those thousand impalpable ties of friendship, acquaintance and social life, which harass the critic who moves among the very men he is called upon to review. There seems to me no doubt that the habit of signing makes for log-rolling and mutual admiration. Mr. Jones reviews Mr. Smith over his signature, and the transaction being thus in the world's eye, Mr. Smith cannot but most amiably retaliate. And so the game is carried on until, instead of a respectable journal and a sound body of opinion, you find the sheet of a trivial clique, insensibly compelled to a dishonesty which is none the better for being inspired by an interested kindliness. Mr. John Davidson, let us say, praises Mr. Le Gallienne, and Mr. Gallienne replies:

“John, you surpass yourself—next week
Expect a flattering critique.”

There is no end to that sort of thing.

¶ The critic alone escapes the damning influence of a too-frequent publicity. Such work as he does is known and approved by his colleagues, but his name is unheard on the elevated, and the tea-tables of the provinces refrain from discussing his family and his tastes. He pursues his craft for its own sake and without the misleading stimulus of uninstructed applause. He has small temptation to take himself over-seriously. He does what he can to sweep the streets of rubbish, because scavenging is one part of his trade; but he does not exaggerate the importance of the achievement. In fact, his work, existing not for the signature's sake but for its own, stands or falls by its merits. No side-issue of notoriety can cheapen it, and the critic alone among men of letters is forbidden to bolster up unfinished articles by the conjuring of a name. If once the signature becomes omnipotent, there is an end of criticism. The larger the name, the more worthless the work; and the journal of the future will become a mere album of autographs, with Chauncey Depew as its principal literary contributor. Hitherto the critic has followed his trade with a proper suppression of self; he has slated his inferiors and been spitefully treated for his pains. But if once he made up his mind to sign every critique he wrote, he might grow as rich as a popular novelist or a respectable pork-packer. Agents would soon be clamoring for a tithe of his income; the syndicates would pounce upon him; he would merily engage in the hunt for dollars. In a brief year the voice of the backbiter would be hushed. An undeserved notoriety would drive his "price" higher and higher. The illustrated papers would interview him (with a portrait) in his "cosy nook," and the evening prints would keep his name standing in type. Perhaps he would go into Congress, or comfort himself with directors' fees.

In fact he would prosper exceedingly and no doubt be regarded as a kind of provisional American judgment-seat. And long before he reached that pinnacle he would have lost the critic's instinct.

¶ Look abroad and see what signed criticism is doing for the critic. Professor Matthews points with some pride, as Zola has done before him, to Jules Lemaitre. He could not have chosen a more unfortunate example; for M. Lemaitre, less than two years ago, confessed that the French practice of signed articles has made criticism impossible. The critic, he said, is so hampered by publicity that he is never able to express his opinion with perfect frankness. He can but give an impartial account of what he reads or sees and leave his readers to draw their own conclusions. M. Sarcey, again, has long since signed himself into imbecility. There is every reason to believe that he once read Aristotle's *Poetics* in a crib, and got so firm a grasp of first principles that his criticism was often sane and generally spirited. But it has long been evident to M. Sarcey that the public is interested not in the articles but in the writer, and he has fallen into the trap with the utmost readiness. He is never tired of discussing Francisque Sarcey — a topic far more thrilling in his eyes than the theatre. Very much the same may be said of George Bernard Shaw. In him, too, the critic is growing less and less and the individual more and more. You may learn, if you read the *Saturday Review* each week, what are his habits, his tastes and his friendships. He is a great critic only because his name is in the mouths of men. Had he pursued his business with a proper modesty, and a better proportion, we should have known nothing whatever of Bernard Shaw's breakfast-table, but we might have been the richer

by several excellent critiques. No; I'm for the old method myself. It is too late, I know, for anonymity to even regenerate British and American fiction; but I would not willingly rob criticism of that one quality of reticence which is and has been its best safeguard.

¶My acquaintance with George Du Maurier does not extend to his writings. I know him chiefly as a clubman, a bright talker, a vivacious companion, and a quick, close observer. Whenever he entered the Garrick Club in London there was a rush to secure him for dinner — a safe sign of popularity. He was a hearty, sympathetic man by nature, as unspoiled by his later and phenomenal success, as he was undeterred by his earlier poverty. What *Punch* will be like without him, it is hard to imagine. In every middle and upper-class household in the kingdom that paper, the very embodiment of English common-sense and stolid humor, is read week by week. And Du Maurier had come to occupy the position held a generation ago by Leech and Keane and Doyle. He was *Punch*. To say that Du Maurier was not so good as usual this week, was as much as to say that *Punch* was not worth buying. Up to the very last his work showed all the old power and thoroughness. Of course he got into a groove; no man could work so persistently without becoming enamoured of a certain type of face and figure. But, taking his work as a whole, it shows an admirable variety and powers of keen perception. He did not pretend to be anything more than a society artist. A drawing-room was his studio and ordinary men and women his models; his situations he found by merely looking across the table. His humor and sarcasm were always plain and unmistakable, but not above the level of average dinner-table conversation. Pathetic,

as far as I remember, he never was. The subtler shades of emotion find no place in his drawings. His aim was to be the black and white historian of English society, and in that he completely succeeded. Sir Pompey Bedell, Sir Georgius Midas, Mrs. Ponsonby de Tompkins, Maudle, the Colonel, soon were all unmitigated English types. You recognized their truth at once ; for you passed some of them in the street every day of your life. His draughtmanship was always strong and effective, but cannot be compared with the exquisite work of Mr. C. D. Gibson. His power of characterisation, except on broad and familiar lines, was rather weak. If Du Maurier had drawn a lady and her servant, standing side by side and dressed ready to go out, you would find it hard to say which was the lady and which the servant. There his successor, Mr. Phil May, will show to better advantage ; for Mr. May began by drawing the coster and the flower girl, and has worked his way through all the intervening classes up to society and the club-room ; whereas Du Maurier began and ended in the drawing-room, and forgot there was such a thing as a kitchen beneath it.

¶ Mr. Richard Harding Davis' letter to *The Critic* denying point-blank the various anecdotes that have been circulated about him, is only one more instance of the calamities of authors. It might perhaps have been just as well to let the whole affair slide and to have simply ignored the astounding sayings that have been fathered upon him. I take it there are very few people who believe anything they see in a daily paper. Mr. Davis has a clever knack of story-writing which he will very soon lose if he allows himself to be interested in his own personality. However, the question is really a curious one. Mr. Davis is

merely the momentary victim of the traditional policy of the American press—the policy of making every well-known man as thoroughly uncomfortable as can be. The plan of campaign is quite simple. A man rises to distinction and he is written down by the press as a snob and a fool; all manner of lies are industriously circulated about him; words he never spoke are put into his mouth; his simplest sayings are distorted; his private life is served up for the public breakfast and embellished to suit the literary tastes of the Bowery. It was so with Conan Doyle; it was so to an intolerable extent with Rudyard Kipling. I believe even now there are several worthy people in Chicago convinced that Kipling declared the chief diversion of Chicago society women to be a daily attendance at the stock-yards. Americans often chafe at the absurd notions about their country current abroad, in England especially. The prevalence of these ideas is due partly to ignorance, but mostly to the American press. There is only one daily paper which can adequately represent us abroad and that is the *New York Evening Post*, a journal with an unfortunately small circulation. Until a healthy public opinion is manufactured which will make the publication of such a paper as the *New York World* an impossibility, we must expect to be generally misunderstood.



